GSA

GSA Office of Governmentwide Policy

Vehicle Views

http://www.policyworks.gov/vehicles

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In This Issue

Postal Service Offers Technical Courses, Meeting Services to Other Agencies

Technical training previously available only to the Postal Service's workforce is now being offered to other agencies. The U.S. Postal Service's National Center for Employee Development (NCED), offers high-technology learning, conferencing, housing, food, fitness, and health facilities on a 55-acre self-contained campus in Norman, OK.

The NCED's main training and conference facilities are about 30 minutes from Oklahoma City, 25 minutes from Will Rogers World Airport, and two miles from the University of Oklahoma campus.

Delivering hands-on technical training is the postal center's forte. Drawing on over 30 years of experience, the NCED delivers concentrated one to three-week courses in industrial technology, vehicle maintenance, and building systems. Courses are taught Monday through Friday from 6 to 8 hours a day.

The center is now opening its services to other agencies. This article offers information on three areas of those services: 1) building systems maintenance training programs, 2) automotive training programs, and 3) conference and meeting facilities.

Building Systems Maintenance Training

Building systems and controls courses currently offered include: Industrial Electrical Service, Air Conditioning (residential), Air Conditioning (heating), Heat Pumps and Roof Top Units, Environmental Safety & Health, Elevator Maintenance, Conveyor Controls, and Programmable Logic Controllers. The building systems courses can answer questions your employees have about the maintenance and operation of the equipment under their care. Courses are long enough to learn the procedures, but short enough to minimize disruption of your maintenance schedule. Specially designed labs and training equipment provide students with individual, hands-on experiences.

Automotive Training

NCED's automotive training program includes courses in automotive electrical, diesel, tune-up, and natural gas vehicle maintenance. Courses include theory of operation, troubleshooting, and safety; and cover most tasks that a technician would encounter in the day-to-day automotive shop environment.

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It's February 2001! It's hard to believe that it has been five years since the Office of Governmentwide Policy, and the Federal Vehicle Policy Division (MTV), were formed. The saying "We've come a long way, baby" takes on a whole new meaning when I look at what the Division, and all the dedicated Fleet Managers throughout the Government, have accomplished in the past five years.

That day we moved into our new home, from what is now the GSA Fleet Program, was filled with much uncertainty. We knew we were bringing with us a few projects that had a governmentwide flavor to them; but beyond that, we didn't really have a clear idea of what we would be doing. Bill Rivers, our "Leader" and inspirational figurehead, and Becky Rhodes (Bill's boss) let us have a fairly free hand in developing our new office, including the ideas we wanted to pursue and the work ethics that we installed upon ourselves. What an exciting time that was!

One of the first things we decided upon was to gather all the Federal Fleet Managers together to find out their ideas on what issues needed to be addressed on a governmentwide level. Out of this initial meeting, the Federal Fleet Policy Council was formed from the old and outdated Interagency Motor Equipment Management Council. From that initial list of ideas came tasks such as a revised Home-To-Work policy, common fleet-related data elements, fleet benchmarking, revision of the Federal Fleet Report (and its input document, the SF-82), standardized license plate ordering procedures, revision of all fleet regulations, standardization of the management information systems for Federal fleets, and further exploration of alternative fuels in the Federal fleet. Although we continue to push for final revisions to the Home-To-Work procedures, most of these other endeavors have been successfully addressed. One of the longest-running, and most time consuming, issues initially taken on was the automation of the Fleet Report. After many starts and revisions, this report will be done through an Internet database for fiscal year 2000 marking the first time since the report was started in 1950 that no "hard copy" input is used. For someone who used to record monthly vehicle usage with a pencil and make fuel credit cards by hand (individually, one-at-a-time on something that looked like a typewriter), this was like watching 2001, A Space Odyssey in the early eighties.

I remember vividly a FEDFLEET meeting in the Spring of 1997 where much of the discussion centered around the difficulty of making national fleet policy in the vacuum of Washington, DC and how many of your agency field representatives were wondering just how to institute some of the unrealistic policies generated by people that had never really "worked in the field." Out of that meeting came the idea of holding a national Federal fleet meeting where all fleet managers from all levels within the Government would get together to explain policies, decide on how to best address the issues confronting fleet management today, and interact with State and local governments and the private sector. We have now held two wildly successful Federal Fleet Manager Workshops that have positively influenced the fleet policies that the Division, and you, make. Those endeavors that you and every Federal fleet professional in the Federal Government made possible have had a tremendous impact on improving the efficiencies and economies of the Government's 580,000 motor vehicles. We are now planning for FedFleet 2002 in Kansas City, MO. I urge everyone to plan for and get involved in this upcoming event.

And what of the people in MTV. Of the original five who started the Division, three of us remain. It seems like I'll be here for the duration. Bill Rivers took his last training class (Retirement 101) a couple years back, but still has a few good years left. And let us not forget John Q. Adams, or "Q" as he likes to be called. Although he's already got more years in Government service than most people, he's still going strong. Patrick McConnell has moved onto the Travel Division and Pat O'Grady transferred to the Transportation Division. Denise Hicks who joined us for a year is now on Becky Rhodes staff. Our two hires "we kidnapped" from the Navy have moved onto better things; Jim Knakmuhs has transferred to the GSA Fleet Program and Ron Keeling has retired to a life of leisure on the

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Additional automotive courses include Air Brakes, Advanced Automotive Electrical, Natural Gas Vehicle maintenance, and Accident Investigation.

Conference Facilities

Two conference facilities provide 20,000 square-feet of meeting and conferencing space. One conference area can seat up to 850 people. This area can be divided into six separate breakout rooms, which can accommodate between 40-70 people per room depending upon seating arrangements. There are additional breakout rooms in this conference area. The other conference area offers 6500 square feet of space and accommodates up to 450 people. This area can be divided into six breakout rooms seating 40-70 people each depending on the room set up. Teleconferencing, video taping, large screens and projectors, business centers, on-site audiovisual staff, and exhibit spaces are also available.

On-Site Housing and Food Service

An on-campus housing facility provides 974 smoke-free sleeping rooms, and is operated by the Marriott Corporation. Two dining rooms (one seating 228 people and another seating 278 people) support specialty food courts, and serve a full breakfast, lunch, and dinner. Also available is a shuttle service to the airport and local attractions, a gift shop, and an on-site health unit with a medical staff.

A state-of-the-art fitness and recreation center features an Olympic-size outdoor pool, spas, a variety of aerobics classes, and a gymnasium.

The NCED delivered over 220 training programs to 60,000 postal employees last year. In addition to the above programs, the Center offers courses in Analytical Troubleshooting, Telecommunication & Networking Technology, Web-Development software, and Team Challenge and Leadership development. Courses can also be custom designed or modified to fit your organization's needs.

The postal center will deliver training for you. For more information, check out NCED's conference center web site at www.conference-ok.com, or call: Earline Charlton, Conference Services, 405-366-4752 or e-mail at echarlto@email.usps.gov or Bonne Karim, Training Coordinator, 405-366-4331 or e-mail at bkarim@email.usps.gov ■

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Bay. Jim Vogelsinger who came to us from the GSA Automotive Center is still writing fleet regulations and is our Internet guru. Connie Aaron who gave up her life as a "real Fleet Manager" to join us is now the lead for FedFleet 2002, MIS efforts, and license plate issues. Jacquie Perry continues to do an excellent job as editor of this newsletter and has taken over the Governmentwide award programs and the Locations of Federal Light Duty Conventional and Alternative Fuel Vehicles by Zip Code report. Last, but surely not least, is Lois Mandell who has spent the past 2-plus years automating the Federal Fleet Report and was the lead person in the automation of license plate procurements.

Although we, and the Federal fleet community as a whole, have accomplished many things in the past five years, there is still much to be done. The Division will soon be meeting to re-focus our efforts for the future. We need your input to address the issues you believe are important to the future of Fleet Management.

Please take the time to email or call us and let us know what you think needs to be done, the problems that are keeping your activity from being the "best in class," as well as what has, or is, working well.

You may email me at mike.moses@gsa.gov with any suggestions or call any MTV representative. ■

New for Automotive

The Sandbagger Corporation

Do you need an expedient method for filling sandbags? The Sandbagger can assist in emergency flood and water control, hazardous spill containment, soil erosion, fire control, roadway construction and barricades.

Vehicular Multiple Award Schedule (VMAS)
Part 23, Section V
Contract Number: GS-30F-0005K
Telephone: (800) 770-7263
Call for a complete listing of available models.

www.thesandbagger.com

The Gradall Company

Hydraulic Excavating Equipment designed to handle a full range of jobs, from fine grading to mass excavation and pavement removal. A full range of attachments are available. Crawler models are both mobile and stable on very rough terrain. The telescoping boom design allows the machine to work with little overhead clearance under bridges or tree limbs.

Vehicular Multiple Award Schedule (VMAS)
Part 23, Section V
Contract Number: GS-30F-0009K

Telephone: (330) 339-2211

Call for a complete listing of available models

www.gradall.com

Amaze-N-Tow, Inc.

The Amaze-N-Tow Pallet Carrier allows any vehicle to have the lifting power and material handling flexibility of a forklift, plus the highway-speed transportation capacity of a large truck. The pallet allows any vehicle with a conventional ball or military hitch to haul and unload heavy loads simply, quickly and safely.

Vehicular Multiple Award Schedule (VMAS), Part 23, Section V

Contract Number: GS-30F-0013K

Telephone: (800) 688-7627

Call for a complete listing of available models

http://home.earthlink.net/~amazentow

Wildcat Manufacturing Company, Inc.

Whether your needs are for high quality composting to remove unwanted material or whether you need to repair those unwanted potholes, Wildcat has the equipment to do the job.

Call for a complete listing of available models

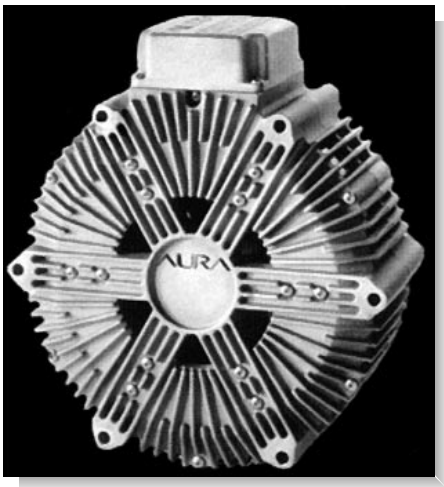
Vehicular Multiple Award Schedule (VMAS) Part 23, Section V

Contract Number: GS-30F-0014K
Telephone: (800) 627-3954

www.wildcatmfg.com

Aura Systems, Inc.

The AuraGen offers customers a new patented approach to generating continuous, pure sine wave AC power. It is mounted under the hood and provides up to 5kW pure Hz sine wave, 120/240 VAC power for operating any type of equipment in combination, from the most sensitive digital computer to the most brute force compressor. The system provides continuous power whether the vehicle is stationary or being driven. To engage power, simply turn on the vehicle and push the button.



Initially the AuraGen will be available for use on Ford F-series pickups, the Ford Expedition, Chevy and GMC C/K series pickups, the Chevy Suburban and Tahoe (and GMC equivalents), and Dodge Ram pickups. Other vehicles will be added to this list in the near future.

Vehicular Multiple Award Schedule (VMAS) Part 23, Section V
Contract Number: GS-30F-0012K
Telephone: (800) 909-AURA

www.aurasystems.com

Contact the Office of Vehicle Acquisition and Leasing Services' Automotive Division's Customer CARE line on (703) 308-CARS to find out about our full line of vehicles and related services. Visit our web site at: www.fss.gsa.gov/vehicles. ■

This article is part of an ongoing series of articles concerning different aspects of the alternative fuel industry and printed in Vehicle Views for your information. The information and opinions expressed in this article are strictly the author's and do not reflect any endorsement on behalf of the Federal Vehicle Policy Division or GSA.

Methanol Fuel Cell Vehicles: Advanced Technology for a Cleaner Environment

Getting Ahead of the Curve

In the two decades between 1970 and 1990, the number of vehicle miles traveled in the United States doubled from 1 trillion to 2 trillion miles. Although today's vehicles produce far fewer emissions, the increasing volume of cars and trucks driving greater distances results in growing levels of air pollution. In California, with the strictest air pollution regulations in the country, they still have not been able to control transportation sector emissions at acceptable levels. Motor vehicles account for roughly half of the emissions that combine to form ground-level ozone – one component of the smog that chokes our cities. Methanol fuel cell vehicles (MFCVs) offer us the opportunity to begin reversing this trend while supplying clean propulsion technology to the transportation sector.

As with many vexing problems, Americans often turn to technology for solutions. The electric battery car – dubbed the Zero-Emission Vehicle (ZEV) – holds out the promise of being inherently clean. However, it does derive its power from the same electricity grid that pollutes. It also has encountered practical challenges in terms of reducing battery weight and cost and its limited range between charging.

Rapidly emerging fuel cell technologies, on the other hand, can make the promise of ZEVs a reality by replacing the internal combustion engine (ICE) with an electric drive train, offering near-zero emissions, comparable performance and range.

In California, the Air Resources Board will finalize rules on January 25 requiring that automotive manufacturers produce a certain percentage of ZEVs, for sale in the state, beginning in 2003. A number of vehicles will qualify for the ZEV credits including battery electric vehicles, fuel cell vehicles, hybrids and others. Methanol fuel cell vehicles stand to receive substantial credits for automotive manufacturers in terms of meeting their alternative vehicle production goals.

A fuel cell functions in a manner similar to an ordinary battery. One pole or electrode is supplied with air or oxygen and the other pole receives a hydrogen-rich stream from a fuel such as methanol (CH3OH). The resulting electrochemical reaction creates an electrical current as electrons migrate to one electrode and positively charged ions (protons) move to the other. The electricity can then be harnessed to drive an electric motor.

According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), over 113 million Americans live in areas that do not meet National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). The principle pollutants regulated by the Clean Air Act (CAA) and its amendments are carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NOx), volatile organic compounds (unburned hydrocarbons or VOCs), and particulate matter (PM). The MFCV will all but eliminate these pollutants from vehicles. A substantial benefit to air quality and the public health may be anticipated as a result.

DaimlerChrysler recently unveiled the NECAR 5. This MFCV represents the company's production prototype for introduction to the marketplace within the next three years. Emissions tests on the NECAR series showed that the MFCV produced no NOx or CO emissions. Hydrocarbon emissions were 0.005 grams per mile, or one-half the Super Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (SULEV) limit set by California.

However, even these extremely low levels of emissions from the MFCV may understate the potential for this technology to control pollution. As methanol fuel cell technology advances, second-generation direct methanol fuel cells (DMFCs), where the methanol is fed directly to the fuel cell, will eliminate emissions of CO, NOx and PM. There might still be tiny levels of VOCs due to the

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evaporation of small quantities of methanol from the fuel system, but even these could be eliminated with a closed fuel system.

Reducing Global Warming

Global emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) – gases such as CO2 and methane (CH4) blamed for an increase in average world temperatures – have been under increasing scrutiny during the last decade. In most industrialized nations, the transportation sector is a major source of GHG emissions.

Fuel cell vehicles (FCVs) have the potential to substantially reduce GHGs in addition to virtually eliminating urban smog. The choice of fuel for the fuel cell can significantly impact the GHG benefit received. The study, "Assessment of Emissions of Greenhouse Gases from Fuel Cell Vehicles," prepared by S&T^2 Consultants for Methanex Corporation, found that decentralized steam reforming of natural gas to produce hydrogen at a service station provided the greatest CO^2 reductions. However, these plants are relatively large, expensive, may require skilled operators and may raise zoning concerns. And while there is an extensive natural gas distribution network in the United States, which of late has proven woefully inadequate, this is certainly not the case in many parts of the world. In countries without pipeline natural gas, methanol derived from natural gas offers the greatest CO^2 reductions. Of the liquid fuels considered for FCVs, methanol clearly provides the largest benefits for reducing GHG emissions, nearly twice that of low sulfur gasoline.

Another way to analyze the greenhouse effect is to consider the total output of CO2, from a fuel's point of extraction from the ground to its final use in a vehicle. This is called a full fuel cycle analysis — or well-to-wheel view — and includes the CO^2 released from the actual conversion of fuel within a vehicle as well as the additional pollutants or GHGs released during the exploration, production and distribution.

Looking ahead to the year 2020, estimates have placed the global fleet of MFCVs at 40 million units. One can expect the total well-to-wheel CO2 emissions from a MFCV to be 243.5 grams per equivalent mile, versus 461.9 grams per equivalent mile for a gasoline ICE car. Assuming that each car is driven 12,000 miles per year, the annual CO2 emission reductions from the global fleet of MFCVs would reach a staggering 104 million metric tons.

Energy Diversity = Energy Security

The majority of the world's methanol is made by converting natural gas into an alcohol. But in the interest of reducing U.S. dependence on foreign oil imports and reducing the U.S. trade deficit, methanol can be produced from domestic resources such as wood, municipal solid waste (MSW), agricultural by-products and sewage. All of these options are extremely attractive and feasible. The cultivation of dedicated cellulosic crops for methanol production may prove to be economical in the future.

A logical place to produce methanol from biomass occurs where the cost of producing the fuel is offset by other benefits. MSW disposal and gasifying dried sewage sludge both meet the criteria. Methane released from MSW landfills and sewage processing plants account for nearly 11 percent of all natural gas released by the United States into the atmosphere. Currently, companies have tapped 140 U.S. landfills and are considering collecting natural gas at another 750, according to the EPA's Landfill Methane Outreach Program. Gasification of MSW can be used to produce a high-quality syngas that is the basic building block for methanol production. This valuable alcohol can then be used in waste water treatment, in numerous manufacturing processes or as a hydrogen carrier for fuel cells.

The University of California at Riverside's College of Engineering-Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT), has constructed the world's first pilot-scale facility demonstrating the Hynol Process. Hynol is a method for converting biomass into a synthesis gas, which can be processed further into methanol. CE-CERT succeeded in operating the facility and gasifying wood chips in December 1999 and January 2000, and will continue to develop and operate this facility throughout 2000 and beyond.

Alternative Fuels – Securing the Future

Methanol can be thought of as an ideal way to transport hydrogen to the fuel cell without suffering the economic and safety disadvantages of handling a volatile pressurized gas. Methanol can also be used in

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The Energy Information Administration's Redesign Efforts for Alternative Fuel Data

by Kathy Gibbard

The Energy Information Administration (EIA) of the Department of Energy (DOE) is presently redesigning its data collection and estimation program for alternative transportation fuels. Section 503 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT), requires the DOE/EIA to provide information on the supply of AFVs, the geographic distribution of these vehicles; the amounts and types of replacement fuels consumed; and the greenhouse gas emissions likely to result from replacement fuel usage. The EIA program includes the Form EIA-886, "Alternative Transportation Fuels (ATF) and Alternative Fueled Vehicle (AFV) Annual Survey," which has been in effect since 1994.

These data are needed to determine if sufficient quantities of AFVs are available for purchase by Federal and State agencies and fuel suppliers, and to provide Congress with a measure of the extent to which the objectives of EPACT are being achieved. The data serves as a market tool for Congress, Federal/State agencies, AFV suppliers, vehicle fleet managers, and other interested organizations and persons. These data are also needed to satisfy public requests for detailed information on AFVs and ATFs (in particular the number of AFVs distributed by State, as well as the amount and location of the ATFs being consumed).

The redesign project will address several issues which involve the security of supply (oil imports), environmental and global climate change, and economic stability. Our goal is to be "THE PLACE WHERE THE PUBLIC COMES FOR INFORMATION ON ATFs." In other words, "One Stop Shopping." The EIA will be evaluating what information policy makers need concerning the issues discussed above. We are considering what our focus is in order to lessen the vulnerability of the oil economy.

The redesign effort will progress in various stages, starting with the development of issue papers.

Following that, we will conduct customer and survey respondent focus groups, develop recommendations and conclusions, design and test new forms, and finalize and gain approval by the Office of Management and Budget. The focus groups will be very important as they will include any organization supplying or using AFVs (government or private sector) and other interested parties involved with AFVs.

The "Redesign Team" is headed by Mary Joyce, with team members: Fred Mayes, Jorge Luna, Chris Buckner, Cynthia Sirk, Susan Henry, Shirley Fleming, Amy Jo Wheeler-Melvin, and myself. The Team is under the Direction of Betsy O'Brien, Director, Coal, Nuclear and Renewables Division.

The team looks forward to working with all interested parties in the next coming months. ■

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vehicles dedicated to the use of alternative fuels. The states of California and New York had successful programs in the past for fleet vehicles running on M-85, a mixture of 85 percent methanol and 15 percent gasoline. However, because the vehicles were not dedicated alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs), employees could also fill the tank with gasoline, which ultimately defeated the purpose of the program. The current fueling infrastructure also can be easily retrofitted to place methanol pumps at the corner energy station for both FCVs and AFVs.

The American Methanol Institute and many other Washington, DC-based organizations feel the time is ripe for greater focus on the use of alternative fuels and new propulsion technology. From both energy security and environmental perspectives we cannot afford to delay. The methanol industry is working with legislators, regulators and allies to prepare for the day when consumers say, "Fill it Up with Methanol."

For additional information on methanol fuel cells, please visit www.methanol.org. ■

Federal Agency Usage of DSCR Provided Re-refined Oil Continues to Grow

In 1995, the Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR) began offering re-refined motor oil to its customers via the Basic Re-refined Motor Oil Program. This program offers re-refined motor oil to federal, civilian and military agencies worldwide. Since that time DSCR has added the Closed Loop Re-refined Motor Oil Program (Closed Loop) that offers re-refined motor oil in the Continental US and includes free pick-up of the customers waste oil, up to 120% of what is purchased. Both programs have packaged products that are readily available to the customer and are competitively priced when compared to virgin oils. The Closed Loop Program even offers bulk deliveries if you meet the 200-gallon minimum order requirement.

Since the inception of DSCR's re-refined oil programs, customer demands have continued to grow. At the direction of Mr. Dave Oliver, the Principal Undersecretary of Defense for Acquisition and Technology, DSCR implemented an Automatic Substitution Policy where all DoD commercial virgin oil requisitions that have a re-refined oil counterpart are automatically substituted with the re-refined oil equivalent. This has helped customers comply with Executive Order 13101/13149 and increase their re-refined oil usage. Likewise, automatic substitution policies are in place for the Department of Justice, Department of Interior and the Department of Transportation. Additionally, DSCR has diligently worked with the US Post Office Fleet Managers and many of them are now participating in the DSCR Closed Loop Program. It is DSCR's goal to work with the US Postal Service as much as possible.

One example of the increase in re-refined oil usage lies within the Department of Defense. As a percentage of DSCR total comparable virgin/re-refined oil usage, the DOD has moved from 8.6% re-refined oil usage in FY97, to 18.8% in FY98, to 27.5 % in FY99, and 38.4% in FY00. Factoring in the automatic substitution policies, DSCR's total re-refined oil usage was up approximately 50.4% in FY00 compared to FY99. DSCR feels that there is still much room for growth in this area both within the Department of Defense and Civilian Federal Agencies.

In conclusion, federal, military and civilian consumers of virgin oil products may purchase the environmentally preferred, re-refined motor oil from Defense Supply Center Richmond. This will help in complying with Executive Orders 13101/13149 and due to the rising costs of crude oil, may reduce overall costs associated with the purchasing of motor oil. To place an order you can call the DSCR Call Center @ 804-279-4865 and press 0. Or use your government credit card by accessing website www.emall.dla.mil. For questions concerning DSCR's Re-refined Oil Programs you may contact Mr. Jim Fazzio @ commercial 804-279-4908 or DSN 695-4908. ■

Electronic Government: Moving Transportation into the 21st Century

The U.S. Department of Transportation's E-Government Pilot

Doing Business On-Line with the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Advances in how we use information technology and the Internet are transforming the way federal agencies communicate with the public, use information, deliver services and conduct business. Used effectively, these advances support government that is more innovative, efficient, accessible and responsive to the public we serve.

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) was established on January 1, 2000. The FMCSA's primary mission is to prevent fatalities and injuries that occur as a result of commercial motor vehicle crashes. Commercial motor vehicles include trucks and buses. In 1999, there were 5,362 such fatalities, and the Administration's goal is to reduce that number by 50% over its first ten years of operation. To accomplish this goal, the Administration works with Federal, state, and local enforcement agencies, the motor carrier industry, labor safety interest groups, and others.

The FMCSA performs a wide range of licensing and regulatory functions and currently does over half of its business with customers on-line and expects that number will grow to 70% in 2001. Customers are the driving force behind the agency's move to Internet-based transactions. The motor carrier industry is among the most technology savvy in America and has expressed a desire to have government transactions be equally modern. Such services will save both business and government time and money and provide the best and latest information to industry and the public.

The FMCSA e-government world is divided into three parts, each of which has created new customer service opportunities:

- On-line transactions via Do-It-Yourself
- License and insurance information via L&I
- Safety Analysis via A&I and SAFER

Do-It-Yourself (diy.dot.gov): On-Line Licenses, Insurance and Fines

The U.S. Department of Transportation's DIY site is now open for business. The service allows trucking companies and independent drivers to pay for their operating certificates, insurance and fines with a credit card over the World Wide Web. For example, with a valid credit card transaction, the system will allow registration on-line. You can check the status of your authority application on line. The process for entering motor carriers credentials has thus gone from months to just minutes.

DIY can be used to:

- Apply for passenger carrier, commercial carrier and other licenses;
- Pay fines;
- Reinstate licenses

Other on-line business services currently available from DIY and related sites include:

- Obtaining licensing authority and insurance histories
- Submitting proof of insurance
- Making a name/address change

Many additional on-line services are being added continuously, so please check the DIY site regularly for updates.

Benefits of DIY for Motor Carriers

- Fast, convenient and user friendly
- Saves time and money
- Eliminates paper forms, checks and postage fees
- Secure and reliable

Benefits of DIY for Government

- Reduces paperwork
- Reduces staff hours and overhead, including data entry costs
- Reduces processing delays – allows same-day entry of credential requests and
- Improves overall customer service

A total of 20,000 forms are processed each month using the motor carrier

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sites in 2000 compared with 10,281 forms processed manually for an estimated cost savings of $2 million annually. Since DIY began production services in January 2000, an estimated 120,000 transactions have been processed.

Every 100,000 forms processed electronically will reduce the workload, on average, by 10 person years, which can be used to support improved national safety. DIY has significantly improved FMCSA's efficiency since the system was introduced in January. Delays and backlogs from manually-processed documents have disappeared in the first 12 weeks after DIY became operational.

License and Insurance Information

http://fhwa-li.volpe.dot.gov

This site supplements DIY by receiving on-line filings of updated motor carrier information such as licenses and insurance. A detailed credentials history of the nation's motor carrier companies is also available at this FMCSA website, including a list of authorized for-hire motor carriers, freight forwarder and property broker licensing and insurance data. The site provides the most up-to-date, real-time information available from the FMCSA Licensing & Insurance database. This site serves more than one million page hits to its customers each month.

Truck and Bus Safety Information On-Line

The information age means that citizens have more and easier access to information, including carrier-specific and overall information about truck, bus and other transportation safety issues and data. The availability of such information will serve to inform citizens and potential customers of a carrier's safety record and will be a powerful tool for encouraging safety today and into the 21st Century. FMCSA has two outstanding web sites for those interested in commercial vehicle safety. Analysis and Information Online (A & I) offers national and state crash data as well as safety information about individual companies. A & I is available at ai.volpe.dot.gov or at the FMCSA home page: www.fmcsa.dot.gov.

A second site, SAFER, provides a quick snapshot of a motor carrier's status and can be found at http://www.safersys.org. This information allows safe carriers to pass roadside inspection sites at mainline speeds using E-screening technology. Current regulations require states to manually check credentials and safety of carriers. Electronic screening allows safe and legal carriers to be checked electronically. This increases productivity of safe and legal carriers and allows FMCSA resources to be focused on high risk carriers. Insurers use the SAFER site to assess a carrier's safety performance and to assess their own risk, giving safer carriers a competitive market advantage. Carriers use SAFER to manage their internal safety programs, while shippers use it in selecting safe carriers. As a result, motor carriers with safe operations gain additional market advantage and further incentive for safety is thereby created. This site also serves more than one million page hits to its customers each month.

A sampling of E-business customers include:

- FMCSA and state safety enforcement personnel to evaluate operator safety;
- Individual commercial motor carriers to assess their own safety record and compare it to the safety records of their industry peers;
- Shippers to determine the safety posture of their cargo carriers;
- The insurance industry to review their clients' safety records and help them prepare safety improvement programs.
- Federal and state safety managers and policymakers to support their analyses of detailed crash and vehicle/driver inspection information to identify safety problems and solutions in specific geographic and/or demographic areas.
- Other federal agencies. For example, the Department of Energy (DOE) frequently employs A&I to evaluate the safety of motor carriers they hire to transport radioactive materials.

In the past, these major users of E-business services have relied on a variety of automated and manual data sources and on-site visits for their information. In the past, DOE had relied on site surveys and DOT's carrier ratings to assess a prospective carrier's safety fitness and now uses this detailed on-line information.

For more information about these sites, please contact Michael Curtis, Chief Information Officer, U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA), at (202) 366-2956. ■

U.S. Department of Transportation Announces Revised Drug and Alcohol Testing Rule

On December 14, 2000, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) announced that it has revised its drug and alcohol testing rule, which affects employees of transportation companies who occupy sensitive safety positions, an action that will further enhance the safety of the nation's transportation, make the testing process easier to carry out and provide additional safeguards for employees.

The rule resulted from a coordinated effort by the Office of the Secretary, six DOT operating administrations – the U.S. Coast Guard, Federal Aviation Administration, Federal Railroad Administration, Federal Transit Administration, Research and Special Programs Administration, and Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration — and transportation employers, labor organizations, and drug and alcohol testing service providers. The department published a proposed rule a year ago. The department received over 400 written comments from interested individuals and organizations. DOT also held three public listening sessions in March 2000 throughout the country to gather additional comments.

The rule amends the department's regulations, first issued in 1988, to require drug testing of employees in sensitive safety positions in the aviation, motor carrier, rail, transit, maritime and pipeline industries. Alcohol testing was added to the requirements in 1994.

The following are some of the changes from current requirements:

- To ensure fairness to employees, a medical review officer – who is a physician — will review the test results when a laboratory indicates that an employee's specimen may have been adulterated or substituted. Any employee will also be able to obtain, at a different certified laboratory, a test of his or her split specimen — so called because specimens are split into two separate containers to allow for retesting — to make sure that the original laboratory did not make an error. Because of the potentially significant impact on the employee following an adulterated or substituted specimen result report, the requirements for physician review and access to testing of the split will be implemented 30 days after publication of this rule. This is consistent with the procedures currently used for drugs of abuse.
- Validity testing, which is designed to deter and detect attempts to adulterate or substitute specimens, will continue to be voluntary on the part of the employer utilizing current procedures. When the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), which regulates drug-testing laboratories, finalizes its mandatory procedures for validity testing, DOT will publish a notice in the Federal Register making validity testing mandatory in the transportation industry. This process will ensure greater uniformity and consistency of testing in all laboratories.
- Employers may apply to the appropriate DOT operating administration for a waiver allowing them to temporarily remove employees from performing safety-related tasks while the medical review officer is deciding whether there may be a legitimate medical explanation for a positive result from a laboratory. The conditions for obtaining a waiver include an important measure to continue to protect employee confidentiality and to allow an employee to be paid during this period.
- Contract service providers (often called consortia or third-party administrators) will be authorized, to a greater extent than previously, to transmit information such as drug test results to employers.
- There is a new "public interest exclusion" provision in the rule which allows DOT to protect the public from the actions of service providers – firms that conduct tests under contract to transportation companies — that violate the department's rules. This provision includes significant due-process protections to ensure that the process is fair.
- There are enhanced training requirements for drug and alcohol

continued on next page

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testing personnel. This measure is designed to refine procedures for collectors and breath alcohol technicians to increase their effectiveness, to ensure accurate tests, to ensure that all medical review officers have current technical and regulatory information and training, and to ensure that substance abuse professionals across the country are consistent in their evaluation and assessment of employees who tested positive in the first round of testing for drugs or alcohol.

The majority of the new rule goes into effect Aug. 1, 2001, to give employers and businesses time to learn about its provisions before moving to compliance. A few provisions, such as medical review officer review of suspected adulterated or substituted specimens, the split-specimen review procedures for validity testing, and the public interest exclusions provision, will go into effect 30 days after publication.

The new rule will be published in the Federal Register on Tuesday, Jan. 19 in part 2 of that day's issue. The document will be posted in the department's Docket Management System, which is accessible on-line at http://dms.dot.gov, docket OST-99-6578. It also may be found at http://www.dot.gov/ost/dapc. A copy may be obtained by calling the fax-on-demand telephone line, (1-800-225-3784) and requesting document 151; by writing to the U.S. Department of Transportation, Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance, 400 Seventh Street, S.W., Room 10403, Washington, DC 20590; or by calling the Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance at (202) 366-3784. ■

Source - Ben Langer

Expanded Safety Violation Hotline Service

Effective January 1, 2001, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) expanded the scope of its 24-hour toll-free driver hotline (1-888-DOT-SAFT) to include consumer complaints on violations of commercial regulations. The 24-hour staffing for the hotline is provided under the Motor Carrier Safety Improvement Act of 1999. Prior to this, the hotline was used by drivers to report violations of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations.

To increase its service to the American public, the FMCSA will accept consumer complaints on violations of the commercial regulations by household goods carriers, which had previously been administrated by the Interstate Commerce Commission. Consumers may call the hotline directly at 1-888-DOT-SAFT to register a complaint or submit their complaint in writing to FMCSA's Office of Public and Consumer Affairs. All written complaints must be submitted on the FMCSA Consumer Complaint Form. Copies of the form are available in hard copy from FMCSA's Office of Public and Consumer Affairs or electronically from the FMCSA website at *http://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/factsfigs/formpubs.htm*.

Completed forms should be mailed or faxed to the following address:

FMCSA Office of Public and Consumer Affairs
400 Virginia Ave., SW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20024

Fax : (202) 358-7100.

Household goods carriers and brokers who are reported to have engaged in violations of the commercial regulations and have demonstrated a consistent pattern of noncompliance with applicable federal laws will be referred to FMCSA's Household Goods Enforcement Team for an on-site review. The expanded use of the hotline provides an opportunity for consumers who have been victimized by household goods carriers operating in violation of federal law to identify these carriers for possible enforcement action. All complainants are assured the confidentiality of their identity.

For further information, please contact James R. Dubose, Office of Public and Consumer Affairs at (202) 358-7063. ■

A New Year's Resolution to Buckle Up America

By Alicia Lowe, NHTSA, Office of Communications and Outreach

Did you know that motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for Americans 25-44 years old?

Did you know that seat belts, when properly used, reduce the risk of fatal injuries by 45%?

Did you know that ONLY 71% of Americans wear their seat belts?

That is why Buckling Up America is a New Year's resolution you, as a member of the largest workforce in the nation, cannot afford to break. Just imagine the effect you and the federal work- force could have if every one of you buckled up on and off the job? Imagine the effect your positive example could have on the nation.

Thousands of lives would not be lost, hundreds of thousands of injuries would be prevented, and billions of dollars would be saved!

This New Year, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is challenging fleet managers and drivers to resolve to keep federal employees buckled up. NHTSA is challenging you to do more than hand over the keys or turn on the ignition.

What You Can Do:

- Before starting your vehicle, make sure each employee and/or contractor occupying ANY seated position is buckled up.
- Place promotional materials (posters, stickers, signs) in your garages, vehicles, and offices.
- Include seat belt use awareness in your driver training courses.
- Participate in national traffic safety events like National Child Passenger Safety Week in February and Drive Safely Work Week in September.
- Visit NHTSA's website at *www.nhtsa.dot.gov* to find out the latest crash statistics, vehicle safety research, and order materials for your traffic safety program. ■

New Child Safety Seat Checkpoint Website

To find out about child safety seat checkpoints in your area, go to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration website at http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov and click on the icon that says "Child Safety Seat Inspections." Users can then enter their state and zip code information to find out about the nearest inspection site. ■

Liability Insurance for Government Travel into Canada

For a possible source of car liability insurance for travel into Canada on official business, contact:

KRG Insurance Group
555 Wilson Avenue
North York, Ontario
M3H 5Y6

Ph: 416-636-4544
Fax: 416-636-5555

Request a Canada Non-Resident Inter-Province Motor Vehicle Liability Insurance Card. It is good for one year. ■

The Office of Vehicle Acquisition and Leasing Services's Automotive Division will hold its annual **Federal Vehicle Standards Conference** for the 2002 Model Year vehicles at the Holiday Inn located in Rosslyn, VA during May 15 – 17, 2001. In addition to holding discussions relating to the 2002 model year vehicles, procurement, engineering and e-Business workshops will be held. Registration forms will be mailed out to customers and vendors around mid January, 2001. In the near future, an on-line registration will also be available. Visit us on-line at www.fss.gsa.gov/vehicles/buying or call our Customer CARE line on (703) 308-CARS for updated information as it becomes available.

FAST Opens to Positive Reviews

In November the Federal Automotive Statistical Tool (FAST) began its first operational season to positive reviews. About 40 agencies have entered data into this Internet application to respond to the EO13149, EPACT, and the SF82 reporting requirements. FAST provides users throughout the world with an easy method of reporting data for their agencies.

FAST has a number of features which help users. The system has extensive help capability including context specific advice, a worksheet for Fuel economy of Light Duty Non-AFV Acquisitions, and guidance documentation. Users can create a unique reporting structure for their agency, use system email and set internal system deadlines for agency reporting requirements. FAST also has several reports available to provide the user with feedback on their progress. These include a completion report, data errors report, AFV data, raw data and the SF82.

Many enhancements are planned to optimize the system for next year. These include additional data checks, documentation updates, training tools and better integration with GSA data. If you would like to make suggestions on improvements to FAST please provide them directly through the site administrator link at the bottom of each page or email Lois Mandell at Lois.Mandell@GSA.Gov. ■

Federal Vehicle Policy Division (MTV)

The Federal Vehicle Policy Division's mission is to ensure the effective and efficient use of the Federal Government's 580,000 motor vehicles and the expenditure of close to $2 billion annually on fleet operations through innovative policies, adoption of best practices, effective communication, and leading edge technologies.

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